

DRAFT

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February __, 1983

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The Government of Bolivia recently extradited former Nazi Klaus Barbie to France to stand trial on charges of crimes against humanity committed during the Second World War. This occasion once again impresses upon us the importance of bringing to justice those who bear responsibility for genocidal acts and other crimes committed during the War. My Administration remains fully committed to bringing these people to justice with the ultimate aim of assuring that such barbaric conduct will never again occur.

Within the Department of Justice the Office of Special Investigations has toiled for several years locating, denaturalizing, and deporting Nazi war criminals who went into hiding in the United States after the Second World War. The Office of Special Investigations has benefitted greatly in its endeavors from the cooperation of foreign governments which have acted in recognition of the principle that the interests of peoples in all nations require that those who have committed heinous crimes against humanity be brought to justice.

The press has recently reported that post-war United States intelligence organizations may have been involved in the escape of Klaus Barbie to South America and preliminary reviews of government records indicate that this matter must be thoroughly reviewed. It would be tragic if the record that Americans made in World War II to save the world from the Nazis suffers such a stain. Here in the United States we have not forgotten the horrors of the Holocaust, and we have established a Memorial Council which is now working to make our country the first outside of the State of Israel to have a continuing memorial to the victims of that unspeakable crime.

ALTERNATIVE CLOSINGS

I understand that the Department of Justice ^{all relevant facts and legal} has inaugurated an investigation into the reports of U.S. complicity in the Barbie matter to determine whether any ~~civil or criminal~~ action should be taken. I am directing everyone in government cooperate with this investigation. I intend also to advise the French that we are willing to cooperate in their judicial proceedings against Klaus Barbie.

OR

To assure an independent assessment of allegations concerning American intelligence organizations and the escape of Klaus Barbie, I have decided to appoint a board of inquiry to be headed by [prominent American], a person of unimpeachable integrity, to obtain any information from any source which will shed light on the matter. I am directing that all federal government departments and agencies provide [him/her] with full and unrestricted access to any information [he/she] requires, and I will be asking the foreign governments with an interest in this matter to render to him all necessary assistance.